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SIPDIS

DEPARTMENT FOR U/S GLASSMAN, NEA, NEA/ELA AND NEA/PPD
DEPARTMENT ALSO FOR S/P, DRL/NESCA AND H
NSC FOR PASCUAL AND KUCHTA-HELBLING

E.O. 12958: DECL: 12/03/2028
TAGS: [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [PHUM](#) [KDEM](#) [KPAO](#) [EG](#)
SUBJECT: GOE APPARENTLY ALLOWS SECOND ACTIVIST TO TRAVEL TO
THE YOUTH MOVEMENTS SUMMIT

REF: A. CAIRO 2454
[1](#)B. CAIRO 2431

Classified By: DCM Matt Tueller for reason 1.4 (d).

[1](#)1. (C) Summary and comment: April 6 Movement activist Ahmed Saleh (reftels) told us the morning of December 3 that GOE security officials allowed him to proceed to his Egypt Air flight to New York after they briefly pulled him out of the departure lounge to hold his passport and search his bags. Just before the flight departed, Saleh indicated to us that he was on the plane, e-mailing us to ask that we ensure his participation in the summit does not become public so that he does not face retribution from the GOE upon his return to Egypt. We believe that Saleh was able to depart on an Egypt Air flight to New York, scheduled to arrive at 3:15 PM EST. Separately, opposition Al-Ghad party member and activist Ahmed Nassar (reftels) told us December 2 that State Security has deferred a response on his travel ban until December 5, when the summit will have concluded. We agree strongly that publicizing Saleh's participation in the summit could endanger his safety upon his return to Egypt. End Summary and comment.

[1](#)2. (C) As he was waiting in the departure lounge to board the flight after security officers released him, Saleh told us that he was careful not to have placed any documentation about the summit in his bags that the officers could have found. Just before Saleh's scheduled flight left Cairo, he e-mailed us the following message in reference to his earlier brush with security officers: "I think they (GOE security) just wanted me to know they are on to me. Please explain what happened to DC and stress again on the security concerns I explained over and over again. My name or face should not appear anywhere as a participant or I'll be arrested upon arrival (upon his return to Egypt)."

[1](#)3. (C) Separately, opposition Al-Ghad party member Ahmed Nassar told us the evening of December 2 that State Security in Alexandria told him they would respond to his questions about his travel ban on December 5. Nassar commented to us that State Security is delaying a response until the summit concludes on December 5. Nassar told us December 3 that he had not received any additional information from State Security regarding his travel ban, and that his Ghad party colleagues have advised him to stay close to his home in Alexandria through the December 10 conclusion of the Eid holiday. Independent newspaper "Al-Masry Al-Youm" reported December 3 that Nassar plans to file a complaint to the public prosecutor requesting an explanation for his travel ban, as well as a suit against the Interior Minister for infringing on his "political rights." Nassar told us that the press report is not accurate.

[1](#)4. (C) Comment: In light of the GOE apparently allowing

Saleh to travel to the U.S., we believe it will be important for the USG to avoid initiating a sharp public exchange with the GOE over the conference, which could lead the GOE to take measures against Saleh when he returns to Egypt. It is unclear to us why State Security allowed Saleh, but not Nassar to travel. The GOE arguably views Saleh as more of a "security threat" because of his prominent position in the April 6 Movement, as opposed to Nassar's more peripheral role. It is possible that State Security allowed Saleh to travel because it did not want to risk further USG interventions following our December 2 demarches on Nassar's behalf (ref A). More ominously, State Security could be planning to gather information about Saleh's activities and meetings in the U.S. in order to act against him when he returns to Egypt. Therefore, it is essential that we respect Saleh's request to keep him out of the public spotlight in the U.S. as much as possible.

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